

Areas of human rights and religious tolerance are slowly progressing although much more could be done. About one fourth of Egypt's 65 million population lives in Cairo and huge numbers live in abject poverty. We visited one of five "garbage cities" in Cairo. These are huge garbage dumps where hordes of the poorest live and eke out an existence by sorting, selling and using garbage under indescribably horrific conditions.

Under Egyptian law, a church cannot be built without approval of the president. Until recently, this restriction also applied to existing churches being allowed to make even the most minor repairs. Although the law remains unchanged, authority to allow repairs has now been delegated to the presidentially appointed governors. It is uncertain how successful this new delegation of authority will be.

President Mubarak said that the concept of discriminating against people is not the policy of Egypt. Many Copts with whom I spoke agreed that there is little if any systematic government persecution. Still, in the course of daily life, with virtually no important government or other positions filled by Coptic Christians, interpretation of laws and regulations, judgments between Copts and other Egyptians, the meting out of routine rulings and the normal conduct of business imposes hardships and unfairness on Copts. Clearly, there are difficulties being faced by Coptic Christians. Many would agree with the statement in an Australian report on Copts in Egypt that "although the government of Egypt would like to believe that keeping silent about the issues will make them go away, it's clear the government could do more to insure the Coptic minority is treated equally."

I would also like to thank the staff at the American Embassy and particularly Ms. Molly Phee who accompanied us during our stay in Cairo. Our Foreign Service corps does an exceptional job under trying and demanding conditions.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

**HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 29, 1998*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4194) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes:

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the Hilleary Amendment which would cut critical funding for the Housing Opportunities for People with Aids program. While I certainly understand the need to support our veterans, this amendment looks to cut funding from the wrong place. It would result in an approximately ten percent cut in a program that makes housing available to the over 100,000 veterans living with AIDS. The HOPWA program is the only federal housing program designed to address the housing crisis of the AIDS epidemic and it pro-

vides vital assistance to 52,000 individuals in 29 states. HOPWA is cost effective and provides needed care and housing for individuals who would otherwise be without a place to live.

Even with last year's increase in funding, Connecticut and the Hartford and New Haven areas actually saw a decrease of \$480,000 in funding because new areas became eligible for funds. A further cut in funding will make precious HOPWA dollars even more scarce particularly since seven new jurisdictions are expected to qualify for funds in fiscal year 1999.

Connecticut is a leader in AIDS housing, and at one time boasted the only statewide AIDS residence coalition in the nation. But even in a state that runs an effective AIDS housing program, the need for funding is great. In 1997, as many as 400 requests for housing in Connecticut were denied solely on the basis of the lack of space. The alternative for many of those denied housing is homelessness, something none of us should feel comfortable with.

Finally, let me talk about the cost of AIDS housing. The average cost of an acute care hospital bed for an AIDS patient is \$1,085 per day, while the cost of HOPWA community housing is far cheaper at a cost of only between \$55 to \$110 a day. In fact, HOPWA programs save an estimated \$47,000 per person per year on emergency medical expenses. The HOPWA program is cost-effective, while providing quality care for people living with AIDS.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment, and to support funding for this important housing program.

IN HONOR OF THE AMERICAN GI FORUM OF THE UNITED STATES

**HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 30, 1998*

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the American GI Forum of the United States, a truly outstanding organization that has served our Nation's veterans for fifty years. They are dedicated to addressing critical issues affecting veterans, with special emphasis on Hispanic American veterans and their families.

Hispanic Americans have always been willing to fight for America's freedom and to defend our peace. They know what it means to wear the uniform of our country and to be willing to bear any sacrifice to keep America free. The American GI Forum has helped to resolve problems of discrimination or inequality endured by Hispanic American veterans.

The American GI Forum is a national veterans family organization and was founded on March 26, 1948, in Corpus Christi, Texas by the late Dr. Hector P. Garcia, a medical doctor who was a veteran of World War II, and other Hispanic American veterans.

The American GI Forum has more than 500 chapters in the United States and Puerto Rico. Although the Forum is predominantly Hispanic, it is a fully interracial organization. The American GI Forum is made up of three separate groups—the Veterans Forum, the Women's Forum, and the Youth Forum.

The American GI Forum is the founding organization of the American GI Forum Hispanic Educational Foundation (HEF), a national educational and scholarship program. It was also the founding organization of the American GI Forum National Veterans Outreach Program, Inc. (NVOP), which is the Nation's premier nonprofit community based service provider of employment and training, economic development, housing, and social service programs.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in saluting the members of the American GI Forum. Their hard work and dedication for America's veterans have set an example for all of us, I congratulate the American GI Forum on their fiftieth anniversary and I wish them continued success in all their future endeavors.

1998 UNITED STATES SINGLES AND PAIRS LAWN BOWLS CHAMPIONSHIPS

**HON. JIM McDERMOTT**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 30, 1998*

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring your attention to the 1998 United States Singles and Pairs Lawn Bowls Championship, sponsored by The American Lawn Bowling Association and The American Women's Lawn Bowls Association (ALBA/AWLBA), which will be held in Seattle, Washington, August 17–August 21, 1998.

The sport of lawn bowls, also known as bowling on the green, has been played throughout Europe in various forms since it was introduced by soldiers of the Roman empire. Similar to the games of bocce ball and curling, it was one of the first sports introduced to the New World. Records show that Williamsburg, Virginia had a bowling green as early as 1632, and that another green was built in 1670 at what is now Bowling Green, Virginia. The American Lawn Bowls Association, one of the oldest national sports federations in our country, was founded in 1915, and since 1918 has consistently sponsored a national championship. During the 1930's, the Works Progress Administration built greens at a number of public parks across the country, and the sport experienced a small boom. It declined after World War II, but began to rebound in the mid-1970's, and has gained considerable popularity in California and in areas of Florida, particularly around St. Petersburg.

Although lawn bowls has been thought of as a pastime primarily enjoyed by senior citizens, the game is beginning to attract more young players as a competitive sport and leisure activity. Over eight thousand people, some over 70 years old, are affiliated with ALBA/AWLBA, and compete in numerous lawn bowl clubs in every region of the country. ALBA/AWLBA is committed to promoting the benefits associated with the sport in hopes of expanding participation in lawn bowling. Studies have shown that for a variety of reasons, Americans young and old, are becoming more sedentary. Many health problems can be avoided by the inclusion of a regular regimen of exercise. The inclusion of a physical activity such as the game of lawn bowls, is essential for the maintenance of good health and mental spirits.

In my district, the 7th Congressional District of Washington, the Jefferson Park Lawn Bowls